

March 1, 2019

**From the Office of the Senate President
USFSP Student Government 47th Term**

St. Petersburg, FL - Since January 2018, when the proposal for the USF system consolidation became public, our student body has been concerned, confused and fearful of the unknown. As the work of the Consolidation Task Force has come to a close, a number of our campus and community leaders have addressed this issue directly. In light of recent comments, we feel that it is necessary to speak clearly and definitively on this issue.

We have solicited feedback from the students we represent, with the most consistent concern being the ability of the campus to retain and expand its unique role in the USF System. Recently the USF Consolidation Task Force submitted a number of recommendations that represent the several months of research focused on community and campus input. The student's voices must be heard: USFSP must be a branch campus. As USFSP plays a unique role in the USF System, its individuality is something that cannot be replaced or eliminated. The culture of the campus, its sense of community and belonging, and the diverse student opportunities cannot be compromised.

The recent letter sent by the USF Tampa Faculty Senate was willfully ignorant, and unfortunately represented another example of where faculty members can fail to work in the best interest of the students. As current representatives of the students, we understand that the needs of students and faculty do not always align. However, the University System has the principal responsibility of educating and supporting the next generation of leaders in the State of Florida, and to accomplish this, USFSP must be a branch campus.

To that end, we thank the academic leadership at USFSP and USFSM, who have worked closely with current and recent Student Government Administrations. They have worked in the best interest of the students, and among them we recognize Former and Current Faculty Senate Presidents Debra Sinclair, Ray Arsenault, and Deanna Michael. Special Consideration is also due to the Dean of the Nelson Poynter Memorial Library, Catherine Cardwell, for her extensive work on the issue of textbook affordability.

Tiffany Porcelli
Senate President

Daniel "Kaeden" Kelso
Student Body President

Nisuka Williams
Chief Justice